

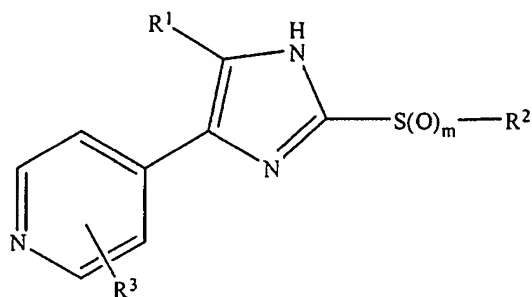
IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as follows:

Claims 1-15 (Canceled).

Claim 16 (New): A 2-thio-substituted imidazole derivative compound of the formula

I



wherein

$R^1$  is aryl which may or may not be substituted by a halogen atom;

$R^2$  is selected from the group consisting of

a) aryl- $C_1$ - $C_4$ -alkyl, and

b)  $C_1$ - $C_6$ -alkyl;

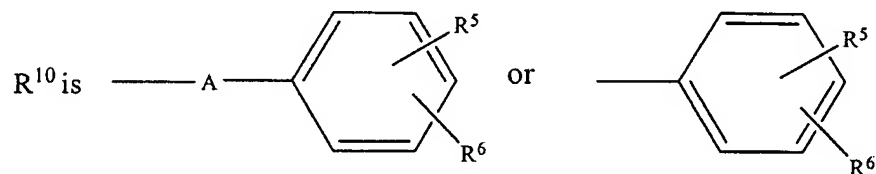
$R^3$  is selected from the group consisting of

a)  $NR^4R^{10}$

b)  $NR^7COR^8$ , and

c)  $C_1$ - $C_6$ -alkoxy;

$R^4$  is H;



$R^5$  and  $R^6$ , which may be identical or different, are H, halogen,  $C_1$ - $C_6$ -alkoxy or  $C_1$ - $C_6$ -alkyl;

$R^7$  is H,  $C_1$ - $C_6$ -alkyl or benzyl;

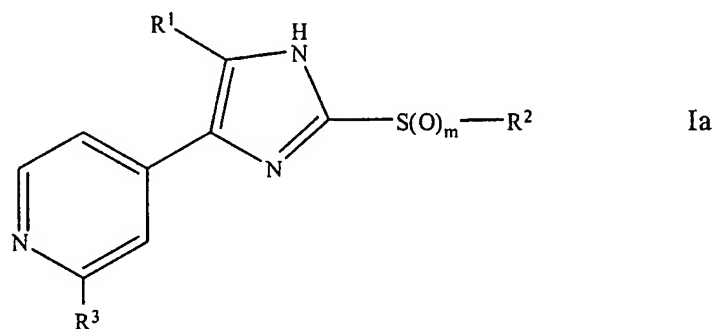
$R^8$  is  $C_1$ - $C_4$ -alkyl,  $C_3$ - $C_6$ -cycloalkyl or phenyl, where the phenyl group may have one or two substituents independently of one another selected from the group consisting of  $C_1$ - $C_4$ -alkyl,  $C_1$ - $C_4$ -alkoxy and halogen;

A is straight-chain or branched  $C_1$ - $C_6$ -alkylene or  $C_2$ - $C_6$ -alkenylene and

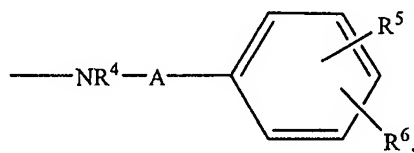
m is 0, 1 or 2;

or a tautomer, an optical isomer or a physiologically acceptable salt thereof.

Claim 17 (New): The compound as claimed in claim 16, which has the formula Ia:



Claim 18 (New): The compound as claimed in claim 16, wherein  $R^3$  is



Claim 19 (New): The compound as claimed in claim 18, wherein A is  $C_1$ - $C_2$ -alkylene.

Claim 20 (New): The compound as claimed in claim 18, wherein A is ethylidene.

Claim 21 (New): The compound as claimed in claim 18, wherein  $R^5$  and  $R^6$  are H.

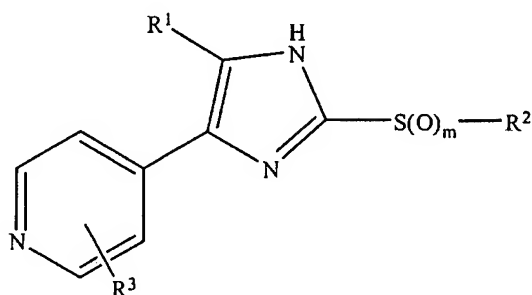
Claim 22 (New): The compound as claimed in claim 16, wherein  $R^1$  is 4-fluorophenyl.

Claim 23 (New): A pharmaceutical composition, comprising at least one compound as claimed in claim 16, and one or more pharmaceutically acceptable carriers and/or additives.

Claim 24 (New): A method for treating inflammatory disorders in which  $TNF-\alpha$  and  $IL-\beta$  are involved which comprises administering to a person in need of such a treatment an amount of a compound as claimed in claim 16 sufficient to have anti-inflammatory action.

Claim 25 (New): A 2-thio-substituted imidazole derivative compound of the formula

I



wherein

$R^1$  is aryl which is substituted by a halogen atom or by halo- $C_1$ - $C_6$ -alkyl;

$R^2$  is selected from the group consisting of

a) aryl-C<sub>1</sub>-C<sub>4</sub>-alkyl, and

b) C<sub>1</sub>-C<sub>6</sub>-alkyl;

R<sup>3</sup> is selected from the group consisting of

a) NR<sup>4</sup>R<sup>10</sup>,

b) NR<sup>7</sup>COR<sup>10</sup>,

c) OR<sup>10</sup>, and

d) NH<sub>2</sub>;

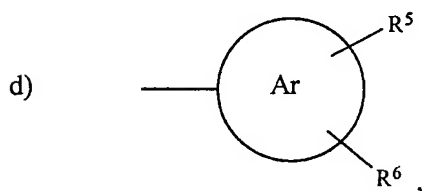
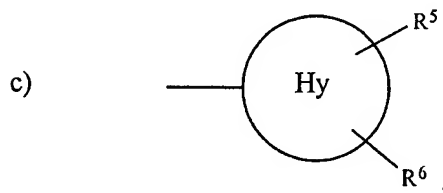
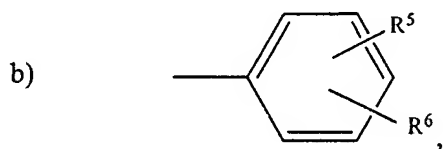
R<sup>4</sup> is H, -COR<sup>14</sup>, -CO<sub>2</sub>R<sup>14</sup>, -CONH<sub>2</sub>, -CONHR<sup>14</sup>, -CHR<sup>16</sup>-OR<sup>14</sup>, -CHR<sup>16</sup>-O-COR<sup>14</sup>, -COC(R<sup>16</sup>)<sub>2</sub>-OH, -COR<sup>15</sup>, SO<sub>2</sub>R<sup>15</sup> or -SO<sub>2</sub>R<sup>14</sup>, R<sup>14</sup> is C<sub>1</sub>-C<sub>6</sub>-alkyl or CF<sub>3</sub>, R<sup>15</sup> is phenyl or tolyl, and R<sup>16</sup> is H or C<sub>1</sub>-C<sub>6</sub>-alkyl;

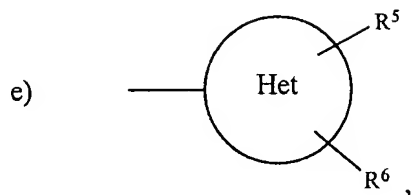
R<sup>5</sup> and R<sup>6</sup>, which may be identical or different, are H, halogen, C<sub>1</sub>-C<sub>6</sub>-alkoxy, C<sub>1</sub>-C<sub>6</sub>-alkyl or halo-C<sub>1</sub>-C<sub>6</sub>-alkyl;

R<sup>7</sup> is H;

R<sup>10</sup> has one of the meanings below:

a) A — B,





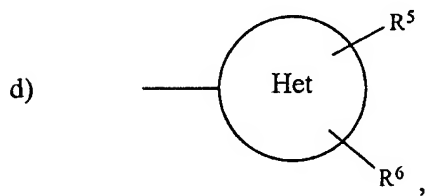
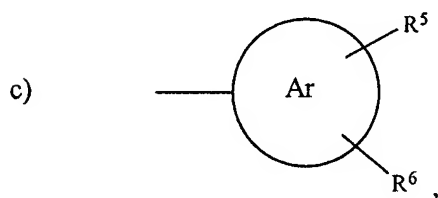
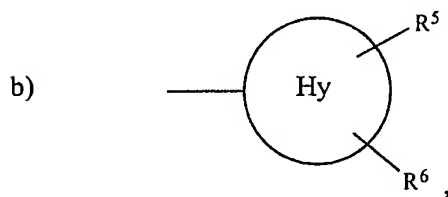
f) C<sub>1</sub>-C<sub>6</sub>-alkyl which is substituted by 2 phenyl groups, or

g) trifluoromethyl;

A is straight-chain or branched C<sub>1</sub>-C<sub>6</sub>-alkylene or C<sub>2</sub>-C<sub>6</sub>-alkenylene;

B is selected from the group consisting of

a) H,



e) OC<sub>1</sub>-C<sub>6</sub>-alkyl, and

f) OH;

Hy is a 3- to 10-membered non-aromatic mono-, bi- or tricyclic carbocycle which may or may not be fused with a benzene ring;

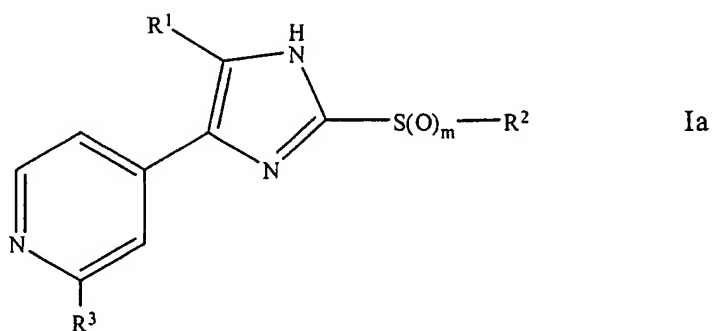
Ar is a 5- or 6-membered aromatic heterocycle which has 1, 2 or 3 heteroatoms independently of one another selected from the group consisting of O, S and N and which may or may not be fused with a benzene ring;

Het is a 5- or 6-membered aromatic heterocycle which has 1, 2 or 3 heteroatoms independently of one another selected from the group consisting of O, S and N which may or may not be fused with a benzene ring and which may or may not be bridged bicyclically or tricyclically;

m is 0, 1 or 2;

or a tautomer, an optical isomer or a physiologically acceptable salt thereof.

Claim 26 (New): The compound as claimed in claim 25, which has formula Ia:



Claim 27 (New): The compound as claimed in claim 25, wherein R<sup>10</sup> is A-B and B is selected from the group consisting of OC<sub>1</sub>-C<sub>6</sub>-alkyl and OH.

Claim 28 (New): The compound as claimed in claim 25, wherein R<sup>3</sup> is NR<sup>7</sup>COR<sup>10</sup>, and R<sup>10</sup> is selected from the group consisting of -O-C<sub>1</sub>-C<sub>4</sub>-alkylphenyl, phenyl and C<sub>2</sub>-C<sub>6</sub>-alkenyl which is substituted by phenyl.

Claim 29 (New): The compound as claimed in claim 25, wherein A is C<sub>1</sub>-C<sub>2</sub>-alkylene.

Claim 30 (New): The compound as claimed in claim 25, wherein A is ethylidene.

Claim 31 (New): The compound as claimed in claim 25, wherein R<sup>5</sup> and R<sup>6</sup> are H.

Claim 32 (New): The compound as claimed in claim 25, wherein R<sup>1</sup> is halogen-substituted phenyl or CF<sub>3</sub>-substituted phenyl.

Claim 33 (New): A pharmaceutical composition, comprising at least one compound as claimed in claim 25, and one or more pharmaceutically acceptable carriers and/or additives.

Claim 34 (New): A method for treating inflammatory disorders in which TNF- $\alpha$  and IL- $\beta$  are involved which comprises administering to a person in need of such a treatment an amount of a compound as claimed in claim 25 sufficient to have anti-inflammatory action.

Claim 35 (New): The compound as claimed in claim 25, which is {4-[5-(4-fluorophenyl)-2-methylsulfonyl-1H-imidazol-4-yl]-pyridin-2-yl}-(tetrahydropyran-4-yl)amine.

Claim 36 (New): The method according to claim 24, wherein the inflammatory disorder is rheumatoid arthritis.

Claim 37 (New): The method according to claim 34, wherein the inflammatory disorder is rheumatoid arthritis.